

## WORSHIPPING GOVARDHAN HILL

One day, Krishna and Balaram watched the cowherd men preparing a ceremony. Krishna asked, "My dear father, what is this all about?" Nanda Maharaj said, "My dear boy, our family does this every year. Because we need water so much, we must show thanks to Indra for sending us the clouds to pour down enough rain. Water is very important because without rainfall we cannot farm or produce grain, and without grain we cannot live."

But Krishna asked His father to stop the sacrifice. Whatever benefit is supposed to be derived from the demigods is actually bestowed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Without the permission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one cannot bestow any benefit upon others. So Krishna explained, "There is no need for this. Please begin a special ceremony to worship the local brahmanas and the Govardhan Hill and let us have nothing to do with Indra. Make very nice foodstuffs like Dahl, halvah, pakora, puri, sweet rice, sweet balls, sandesh, rasagulla and laddu. Ask brahmanas to chant Vedic songs and offer grains to the fire. Then decorate all the cows and feed them well. Give money and grains in charity to the brahmanas and feed every man and animal with nice prasadam. After feeding grass to the cows, the ceremony known as Govardhan Puja may begin. This ceremony will certainly satisfy Me."

And so Nanda Maharaj called the brahmanas and began worshipping Govardhan Hill by chanting and offering tasty prasadam. Everyone in Vrindavan came with their decorated cows. After feeding them, they kept the cows in front and went around Govardhan Hill. The gopis dressed up nicely and sat in bullock carts, chanting about the wonderful pastimes of Krishna. The brahmanas gave their blessings to the cowherd men and their wives. Then, in front of everyone, Krishna turned Himself into a huge and wonderful form. He said, "I am Govardhan Hill," and He began to eat the food offered there.

When Lord Indra saw that his sacrifice was stopped by Krishna, he became very angry.



Indra called for the terrible Samvartaka clouds and said, "Go over Vrindavan and cover everything with floods. I will also go riding on my elephant along with great storms. I shall use all my strength to punish the people in Vrindavan."

Ordered by King Indra, all the dangerous clouds went over Vrindavan

and began to pour water with all their strength and power. There was constant thunder and lightning, severe winds and rain. Every man and animal in Vrindavan was shaking with cold and went to Krishna to take shelter.

Little Krishna then picked up Govardhan Hill with one hand, exactly as a child picks up a mushroom from the ground. He looked at all the devotees, "My dear brothers, My dear father, My dear friends, now come under the umbrella of Govardhan Hill, which I have just lifted. Do not be afraid that the hill will fall from My hand." Everyone with their animals stayed there for seven days and seven nights, without feeling hungry or thirsty. They were simply amazed to see how Krishna held up the mountain with the little finger of His left hand. Krishna is thus known as Giridhari, the lifter of Govardhan Hill

Seeing the wonderful power of Krishna, Indra, the King of Heaven, called for all the clouds and asked them to stop. There was sunshine again and strong winds stopped. He said, "My dear friends, now you can leave and take your families and things back to your homes because the danger has ended. The floods are finished." After they had cleared out everything, Lord Krishna very slowly put Govardhan Hill down where it had been before. Then, with His dear friends and animals, He went back to His own home.

Indra, the King of Heaven, understood now that he had behaved very badly, and came to apologize to Krishna with the help of Krishna's dear devotee, the Surabhi cow. "My dear Lord, I was so proud that I thought You were taking my share of the offerings away. Now, by Your grace, I understand that You are the Supreme Lord. Therefore, my Lord, please forgive me and bless me so that I do not act so foolishly again."

Lord Krishna smiled and said, "My dear Indra, I have stopped your sacrifice only to show you that I am always your master. You should always remember that everything you have is coming from Me. Everyone should always remember that I am the Supreme Lord."

After this, King Indra, the demigods and the Surabhi cow worshiped Lord Krishna. They bathed Him with Ganges water and milk from the Surabhi cows, which could give anything you wished for. Everyone sang and danced and the demigods poured showers of flowers from the sky. The cows flooded the ground with their milk and the rivers watered the trees, making nice fruits and flowers of different colors and tastes and smells. The trees poured drops of honey, and the hills and mountains gave nice plants and jewels. Because of Krishna all these things happened very nicely. And so King Indra went back to his heavenly kingdom along with all the demigods.

